



IWA EXTERNAL BULLETIN FEBRUARY 2014

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Editorial

As the screws tighten on workers' movements and social protests, we are witness to an increased repression. People who have taken part in protests and strikes are being arrested and otherwise repressed. Comrades from Spain were arrested in various actions, comrades in Brazil face jail sentences and being declared an „illegal union“. At the same time, many comrades face dismissals and lawsuits for their workplace actions. Comrades in San Carlo hospital have lost a ridiculous suit by administrators and face heavy sanctions. Likewise comrades from ZSP must fight in court against a hospital administrator accused of sexually harrassing some workers.

In this time of repression and increased mobilization of the capitalists against workers' rights, we must remember that solidarity is our greatest weapon!

In this issue of the IWA Bulletin, you can read about some of the cases of repression against our comrades. There are also reports of various struggles which our Sections are involved in.

The comrades in Dresden have gone on strike to protest dismissals at the Trotsdem Bar, where they formed a union. Comrades in Poland are involved in organizing agency workers and a boycott of one supermarket chain. In Spain, the comrades of CNT continue the actions against Santander Bank and call for a new International Day of Action on March 6.

These are just some of the things you can read about in this issue of the External Bulletin. We hope you enjoy!

IWA General Secretary

Anarcho-Syndicalist Waiters in Germany Strike Against Dismissals

The FAU gastronomy section struggles for a strong movement in this branch. Waiters of a trendy leftist club in Dresden are on strike. All of them are members of an anarcho-syndicalist group and have been fired for dubious reasons. Now the local branch union fights for re-employment including a company agreement or alternatively the collectivisation of the business.

The colleagues founded a workplace group in May 2013, in which all waiters of the club have been organized. In May/June they forced a 20% wage increase. After that, they organised themselves with colleagues from other companies and founded the BNG-FAU (Gastronomy and Nutrition Section of the FAU) in July, 2013.



Last month, half of the employees were surprisingly fired. BNG-FAU interpreted this as attack on the waiters' unionist organisation and threatened to start a strike. When the owner of the restaurant "Trotzdem" refused to negotiate, all organised workers started a strike on February, 2014. Although the temperature sunk to -2 °C, around 10 to 20 people make an informational action for the customers every day from 8pm to 12 am. On the third day, the club owner started to engage scabs, yet the business dropped due to the solidarity customers who avoided visiting the club.

The press feedback ranges from local to nationwide reports about the conflict. Strikes of gastronomy workers, who earn 450€ a month at most, are uncommon in Germany. The centralised unions only have members in some of the few larger clubs and restaurants. So BNG-FAU already became more visible in Dresden's gastronomy scene than the social democrat NGG (Food, Beverages and Catering Union).

The club's owner is trying to sit out the situation while the number of guests steadily declines. The BNG-FAU pickets talk to colleagues from other clubs to extent the conflict to other companies. On February 10,

two lectures and an open discussion to inform about the situation in the gastronomy sector are planned.

During the upcoming week, there will be a public labour law training course and a demonstration. The pickets of the BNG-FAU visit other clubs on a daily basis to inform people about the conflict and our union.

The comrades would be glad to receive solidarity greetings from other countries to exemplify the solidarity of libertarian workers.

More information:
trotzdemunbequem.blogspot.de



Actions at Impuls Agency: Workers Organize and Campaign against Trash Contracts



Since July, ZSP has been campaigning and making actions at an agency called impulse. Now more than a dozen former employees are organized in ZSP, organizing and taking action with current employees and campaigning to improve the situation of workers in such agencies in general.

A series of actions has resulted in the payment of more than 14,000 euros all ready to fighting workers.

Impuls Agency specializes in hiring seniors who cannot afford to retire. They are hired on trash contracts, mostly at 80 euro cents per hour. Since they are not given employment contracts, but the boss pretends they are independent contractors, they are not paid anywhere near the minimum wage. They also are not given overtime payments, paid vacation, sick leave,

etc. These desperate workers, who are discriminated against on the job market, can work 200-300 hours a month. 250 hours a month will earn 200 euros. These are completely outrageous working conditions.

If this were not bad enough, the company simply does not pay many workers. Some quit after not being able to get paid, some keep going back to the office, only to be told there is no money. One man, who did not receive any salary for 6 months, received an eviction notice.

It may be hard for people to understand how people keep working in such conditions, but it shows the reality of the job market in Poland and the especially poor conditions for people over 50 and 60.

ZSP carried out a number of direct actions at the office, occupying it, etc. During these actions, the company was forced to make various payments to the workers present.

Besides these actions, we have put in suits to the Labour Courts since many people should have been considered normal workers. This means they should have received a higher wage, overtime payment, vacation pay, etc.

The situation was described numerous times in the press and our occupation was shown on television. Following this, the company started to lose business. About 2/3 of their clients terminated contracts. ZSP activists were visiting former clients, encouraging them to hire the workers directly. Many were hired through another agency.

In one situation, we found that the new agency was also no good. This was in a municipal building. So a campaign was started that the city hire workers directly, not through outside agencies. We also campaign that firms that win public tenders from the city must be required to have all workers on proper working contracts.

More actions are planned soon and we are contacting with workers from other agencies affected by these problems.

Roche Tries to Stall

A legal battle against the multinational Roche has been going on for over two years. Our comrade has taken them to court to challenge the system of employing IT workers. Since the beginning of the case, Roche has been forced to make changes to avoid liability. If the comrade wins, it will be a significant

event. IT workers around Poland have been being denied regular employment in various ways that ZSP has been challenging.

But the lawyers and Roche are trying everything they can do stall the case. In particular, they are trying to keep the witnesses off the stand. A summons to appear in court delivered to a manager at Roche was never given to him. And

the lawyers have used a manoeuvre, claiming that a witness might have an interest in the case, to postpone hearing his testimony. The case has been postponed for 7 more months.

Despite all the obstacles and time lost in this process, the comrade will not give up. We continue to inform IT workers about the problems of precarious work in the industry and encourage them to organize.

Campaign at Dino Supermarkets

At the end of 2013, Dino Supermarkets terminated the employment of the workers who had organized a trade union. In January, 6 more workers lost their jobs, 3 of them for making comments or liking the union Facebook page.

One of the women fired was our comrade. The workers had decided to join Solidarity since it seemed that they had been organizing in supermarkets and it is a big union. However, it soon became clear that the regional leadership of the union were there to serve the bosses.

The union tried to discourage the dismissed unionists from bringing any case to court or protesting the situation. They were told to sit quiet. Our comrade decided to go ahead without the union bosses and we put in a suit to the court and started with actions against the supermarket.

The regional leader of Solidarity met with the supermarket, without the presence of the fired women. In a classic „divide and conquer” move, he agreed with the bosses to get one woman returned to work, but that M. would not be rehired. The woman who went back to work was given worse conditions than before, even though a labor code would have probably reinstated her with all previous conditions. The bosses and union bureaucrat decided that a condition for being reinstated would be that she sign some sort of loyalty agreement and she was not allowed to look at it in advance or have any time to think about it. After this, she withdrew some accusations against Dino about violations of the labor law, which had been filed with different authorities. She also deleted emails in the union mailbox from workers who had sent evidence of violations and started to delete certain comments about Dino from the FB of the union.

ZSP called for a boycott of Dino Supermarkets and for the reinstatement of M. A few pickets were held in different parts of Poland and more are planned for the nearest future.

This case drew national media attention. Other workers started to write to us about their problems with Dino. We found out about a case of mobbing and that somebody was fired for taking time off to care for an ill relative. A number of other firings were reported and we are checking out reports of poor working conditions. One of the pickets was in the town of Ornontowice, where the woman was fired for taking time off.

A short while after the campaign started, it was drawn to our attention that another union was registered at Dino. But workers quickly recognized that the founders of the union were all part of management. News of this yellow union was also described by us and then picked up by the national media.

The campaign is just now becoming more known and information is spreading to the small towns where most Dino supermarkets operate. Dino has responded to the campaign by threatening to sue us and by trying to get our internet provider to close down our page.



It also has generated controversy in Solidarity, with some rank and file activists supporting. However some are now claiming that the „workers are happy” because most of them are not organizing protests. So this campaign also has to expose the mechanisms of controlling workers by the bosses and union bureaucrats.

ZSP has set up an online form for sending email protests to Dino, as well as to Solidarity. So far the response has been very good. dino.zsp.net.pl

In the meanwhile, we are trying to gather more information about the working conditions and see if something can be organized as an alternative to the existing union in Dino, which has been helping management to control the workers.





The International Workers' Association against Bank Santander

On December 12, the Santander Bank, Isban and Panel Systems had to face an impressive mobilization of workers united amongst equals. The Sections of the International Workers' Association, the anarchosyndicalist international, supported the call for solidarity from the workers in conflict.

Dozens of actions took place against the stupified companies which are complicit in the trafficking of the workforce.

Overcoming the absurd frontiers that divide the planet, the message of the Isban workers in struggle was distributed in 12 different languages (Spanish, Catalan, Basque, Galician, English, Chinese, Russian, French, Portuguese, Polish, Norwegian and Slovak).

In Portugal, the Portuguese Section of the IWA organized various pickets. In the center of Oporto bank Santander Totta was visited. Also in Lisbon the AIT-SP mobilized in solidarity with the ISBAN workers.

In Poland, members of the ZSP visited various branches of Santander Consumer Bank in Warsaw. They distributed leaflets to clients and passersby, informing them about the precarious situation of the subcontracted workers and the dismissal of the delegate of the CNT-AIT in Isban for his union action. When the branches closed, they finished the protest and put up posters on their windows.

In Argentina, members of FORA-AIT concentrated their efforts in the city of Buenos Aires. There they developed numerous actions at the most important branches of Santander Río bank.

In Norway, the NSF-IAA gave out leaflets, which were well received by the people of Oslo, who were interested in knowing the details of the union conflict.

In Bath, members of Bristol SolFed organized a demonstration outside of a local Santander Bank.

KRAS from Russia and Priama Akcia from Slovakia, which are in places where Santander Bank have no

presence, sent letters to the heads of the companies. In such a way, they expressed their solidarity with the struggle and demanding an end to the outsourcing and reinstatement of the dismissed comrade from Isban. Faxes and emails were sent to the headquarters in Spain and to the Czech Republic.

Also in France anarchosyndicalists sent letters since there were no branches in their area.

In the US, activists made a picket for 2 hours at the branch of Santander Bank in the center of Philadelphia, with a banner and black and red flags. Due to the cold and the opposition from the branch management, who sent private security on them to chase them away, they made their protest near the bank, which few clients entered.

In addition, emails were sent to Emilio Botín, Isban, Banco Santander

and Panel Sistemas from all over the world, demanding the reinstatement of the dismissed comrade.

In Spain, the CNT organized actions. In Madrid there was a protest at the central headquarters of the bank. The anarchosyndicalists shouted for the reinstatement of their comrade. More than 500 leaflets were distributed to clients and passersby that were interested in the conflict.

In the afternoon, a new solidarity action took place at the offices of Isban, where the comrade workers until he was dismissed for union activity. The reaction of the workers of Isban was different: the strikebreakers and other creeps did not take any leaflets while others were happy about the success of the direct action.

Security guards forceably removed the protesters, who continued to protest at the entrance of the business park. Over 400 more leaflets were distributed. The local and national police, at the request of the private security, moved to the place without taking any data from anybody or being interested in what happened. As usual, a couple of managers from the company invigilated the protest.

During the protest, a banner was put up on one of the entrances to the offices that said "No to illegal outsourcing in Banco Santander. Reinstatement of the dismissed comrade. CNT Isban".

The doors to the offices of Panel Systems, the subcontractor for the bank, where the worker who was fired from Isban was sent from, was covered with informational leaflets.

A new banner covered the workplace of the dismissed comrade. The director of „human

A new banner covered the workplace of the dismissed comrade. The director of „human resources” of the subcontractor ordered that the propaganda be removed and was taking photos of the comrade. When they could not remove was his clothes: on his T-Shirt he had a message against outsourcing and the logo of the AIT-IWA.

Also in the Spanish capital, hundreds of leaflets were distributed in the central plaza of Tirso de Molina, where various unions of the CNT-AIT have their headquarters.

In Rivas, where there is a confederal cell, the bank's branches were decorated for the occasion.

The group in Fuenlabrada also answered to the call for solidarity and organized a protest at a branch in their town.

Outside of the Madrid area, the shows of solidarity were received from the early morning, in the form of creative decorations of bank branches like in Sabadell in the province of Barcelona.

In Salamanca the anarcho-syndicalists went to the heavily populated Garrido neighbourhood with a protest. The Director and the employees were informed about the conflict by activists from the union while the rest of the comrades protested as people around watched curiously.

In the city of Santander, the CNTistas protested again at the central office of the bank. They entered into the bank to inform the clients and workers about their protest and where kicked out. Outside they protested for hours, annoying the managers of the bank who were keeping an eye on the protest and the distribution of leaflets.



In Donostia, the CNT from Gipuzkoa picketed all afternoon, protested at three different branches of Santander Bank. The reception of the people superceded all expectations, with hundreds of leaflets distributed. In Amara they organized a strange „anarchist competition” in which passersby knocked down cans with photos of politicians and bankers with a lot of rage.

The CNT Granada protested for an hour and a half in front of the central seat of Banco Santander on the Gran Vía in the Andalusian city. Some comrades entered the branch to inform the workers about the conflict.

The anarchosyndicalists of Zaragoza chosen to make a protest in Coso St. in the afternoon. They distributed more than 300 leaflets about the conflict.

In Aranda de Duero, militants from the CNT shouted at the entrance to another branch and took pains to leave a clear message on the facade of the building.

The CNT Vall d'Albaida chose Ontinyent for the action, where they protested starting at 11AM.

Also in Sagunt you could see signs of solidarity made by the CNT.

In Asturias, the CNT of Gijón visited the central offices of Banco Santander in solidarity with the workers of Isban.

In Navarra, CNT Iruña also took to the streets against Banco Santander, Isban and Panel Sistemas.

In La Rioja, the confederal cell from Arnedo and Calahorra moved to both locations, where they received good reception on the part of the workers and clients of the bank.

CNT Pontevedra organized an informational action in Vilagarcía de Arousa.

Also in places such as Motril, anarchosyndicalists demonstrated their solidarity in this international day of coordinated actions.

As we are writing this article on Sunday, December 15, we keep receiving shows of solidarity from very different places.



Confederal and International Mobilization

The CNT and the IWA maintain that this was an unfair dismissal by Isban to repress union activity and they demand the delegate be reinstated in Isban and be recognized as part of its staff, as well as demanding an end to the trafficking of staff between companies.

The strength of solidarity has proved overwhelming. Various locations know firsthand about the irregularities committed by the bank in its workplaces, like the detestable anti-worker practices of this giant multinational: constantly evicting families, selling junk mortgages and subprime loans, tax evasion, charging abusive interest, destruction of historic patrimony, financing arms and the penitentiary system...

In Spain, dozens of revolutionary unions went out to protest against Banco Santander, Isban and Panel Sistemas in places such as Salamanca, Ciudad Rodrigo, Barcelona, Madrid, Rivas, Villaverde, Zaragoza, Málaga, León, Valladolid, Zamora, Teruel, Tarragona, Gipuzkoa, Compostela, Gijón, Alicante, Jaén, Cádiz, Aranjuez, Santander, A Coruña, Jerez, Oviedo, Guadalajara, Pilar de la Horadada, Tarragona, Aranda de Duero, Candás, Granada, Toledo, Vigo, Pineda de Mar, La Costera, Vall d'Albaida, Pontevedra, Sabadell, Motril, Arnedo, Iruña, Sagunt, Elche...

Around the world, anarchist unions of the IWA-AIT have showed their solidarity with the workers in conflict since last September, organizing different actions in support. COB from Brazil, ZSP from Poland, NSF from Norway, KRAS from Russia, FAU from Germany, Solidarity Federation from Great

Britain, the Portuguese Section of the IWA, Priama Akcia from Slovakia, FORA from Argentina, anarchosyndicalists from France, Uruguay, China and the United States have organized various actions against the interests of the bank to support this struggle.

Panel Systems: Hypocrisy and Contempt for the Workers

Panel Systems is a medium sized company whose employees are having difficult times. They profit from the illegal assignment of workers who are sent to powerful clients like Isban (Santander Group).

Despite having huge profits of more than 307.000 euros in 2012, Panel Systems is undergoing a process of wage cuts and mass undeclared layoffs. In the last few months, more than 40 workers have been fired. They always fired just under the limit that would require them to start a group redundancy plan. The staff of 440 employees in 2012 is now down to 394. Others had to accept a „voluntary“ wage cut.

The numerous dismissals are presented as „targets“ due to production reasons, without taking into account that the firm is doing perfectly well.

Also, company directors seem not to know the real numbers well and attribute the falsification of accounts to other directors which have been fired in what appears to be a power struggle for control of the company.

During the year, Panel Systems illegally assigned our comrade to Isban (Santander Group). When the union was established and both companies were informed, the delegate was immediately informed that „the project has changed“ and he was sent back to Panel Systems.

After 3 months working at Panel Systems, the comrade fired from Isban still had not participated in any productive work that is appropriate for his skills.

Also he suffers constant harassment from the management, accusing him of underperformance, because of not informing him of some tasks and they refuse to have a meeting with the union to find a solution to the conflict.

Isban: Misery, exploitation and fear

Isban, a company belonging to the all-powerful Santander Group managed by Emilio Botín, maintain a structure of firms that act as Temporary Work Agencies and provide cheap and precarious staff.

More than 10,000 workers around the world are illegally assigned to Isban. So to dismiss anybody, it is enough to call the „Temporary Agency“. Without any cost to the bank, of course, since, according to them, these are not dismissals but „project changes“ in the assigning company, which normally decides to fire the worker or assign him or her to another „client“.

This practice saves millions a year on contracts and dismissals and also keeps dozens of businesses submitted to their will. All obey the managers since they cannot lose such a profitable „client“. Some assign 100% of their workers to the bank, creating a mafia network of illegal subcontracting.

The climate of fear and helplessness that the workers of Isban live in is absolute. They are afraid to wind up in the streets at the slightest protest. This facilitates the acceptance of surreal workloads, overtime and obligatory transfers, half-time work, categories and salaries below the functions performed and other abuses.



Santander Group: Greed, corruption and plundering

In the last few months there have been hundreds of irregular dismissals in the Santander Group, in what the employees have denounced as a hidden redundancy plan. The IT services in the offices of Isban and Santander Backoffices (SBGM) have seen cuts in personnel of up to 50% in recent months. Those chosen to be dismissed have been less profitable and less protected workers. The outside

personnel (workers illegally assigned), mothers with a reduced working day and workers sent abroad have been the preferred targets of the cuts. With the help of the government and the yellow unions, the mass destruction of work places has been practically free for Santander.

And all this despite the fact that Santander Group has not only got no losses, but had 2,255,000,000 euros profit in the first six months of 2013, almost 30% higher than in the same period of 2012. A

tremendously hypocritical attitude which clashes with the public image of the group which can boast of listing the country thanks to confidence in people and the future. They would be referring to the billionaires that are leading us to unemployment and misery.

More, photos, videos: <http://informaticamadrid.cnt.es/articulo/15-12-2013/la-asociacion-internacional-de-los-trabajadores-demuestra-su-fuerza-contra-banco-santander>

Actions Against Repression

On November 28, some 30 workers were arrested during an education strike in Madrid. Among them were two comrades from the CNT Madrid Education Union. These arrests are part of increased repression against protesters in the Spanish state. The CNT denounced the arrests and state repression, organizing a number of actions in response. In December, solidarity actions were also organized by the SolFed, PA and ZSP.



OHL Represses and Sacks. Actions in Spain and Beyond



On the 9th of October, the company OHL, one of 4 responsible for the cleaning service of the streets in Madrid, decided to fire our comrade Ángel, who had worked at this job for more than 10 years without any problems. The firing came after tensions when the companies that provide cleaning services planned mass dismissals. The CNT, which fights against dismissals, could not accept this and is fighting for the reinstatement of the comrade.

Several pickets have been held in Spain to demand the reinstatement of the comrade. Some Sections of the IWA where OHL is present also supported this struggle by making solidarity actions at OHL's foreign offices. Priama akcia visited the office in Bratislava, delivering a protest and declaring its solidarity. ZSP did the same in Warsaw and in Wrocław. More actions are planned against the company which, despite having good profits, dismisses workers.



Russia: Actions of KRAS

1.12.2013: A group of KRAS-IWA activists participated in Moscow in the protest against state policies in education: cutting of expenditures for education and science, closing of educational centers for the kids, administrative reforms and clericalization processes in the schools and universities, bad working conditions and low wages in the branch. The meetig was organized by some "alternative" unions but the anarcho-syndicalists participated with our own placards and demands.

<http://www.aitrus.info/node/3432>



16.11/2013: KRAS participated in the protest in Moscow which was part of "Action Days for Dignified Healthcare". It was an action coordinated all over Russian against the state policies which destroy generally accessible medicine, making it a privilege for the rich people and depriving the others of the right to life – <http://www.aitrus.info/node/3411>

Priama akcia activities – October 2013-January 2014

Struggles in our region

We were again contacted by several workers who had a workplace-related problem (most, but not all of them working through OTTO Work Force agency), but in none of the cases the struggle went as far as direct actions.

Solidarity with IWA Sections

Santander conflict (CNT-E). Since there is no branch of Santander in Slovakia, we sent a protest fax in October to the Czech branch in Prague demanding reinstatement of the CNT member who was fired because of union activities. We also asked that the company ends firing of the workers, forced overtimes and other abusive practices directed at other employees. We demanded that the branch in Prague informs the Madrid branch about our protest.



Termoelektro conflict (ASI). We responded to the call for actions from ASI and in October we sent e-mails and faxes to the companies responsible for unpaid wages of the Serbian workers in Uruguay.

Redur conflict (CNT-E). In November we supported CNT-Villaverde, whose member was falsely accused by Redur and fired. The real reason was his union activities. We joined the week of actions and sent a protest fax to the Spanish headquarters of Redur as well as an e-mail to the company In Time, the Slovak partner of Redur (together they are part of Eurodis network).

Universidad Complutense de Madrid (CNT-E). Together with ZSP we answered the CNT call to support the activists charged with an attack on five fascists and the seat of their organization at the Faculty of Law of the UCM. On 30th December, we visited the Spanish Embassy in Bratislava.

<http://www.priamaakcia.sk/spravy/Protest-Priamej-akcie-proti-potlacaniu-socialnych-hnuti-v-Spanielsku.html>

http://www.priamaakcia.sk/data/Image/Solidarita/CNT-E/Madrid/N28/BA_Madrid_Soli_1.png

OHL (CNT-E). We supported CNT-Madrid who called for solidarity with a dismissed OHL worker and visited its branch in Bratislava. We also sent a protest fax to the Madrid headquarters.

<http://www.priamaakcia.sk/spravy/Report-z-akcii-pocas-medzinarodneho-dna-proti-OHL.html>

http://www.priamaakcia.sk/data/Image/Solidarita/CNT-E/Madrid/OHL/PA_BA_protest_OHL.png



Against repression and defamation in the press – COB AIT



As has been explained before, the union in Araxá has been participating in struggles against the high cost of living which was started with social struggles against the high price of public transport. A group was formed by militants of the COB, students and autonomous people and it has had some small success in this area. It organized pickets in May 2013, followed by the wave of protests in June.

During the June protests, various fascists were present in the streets. There were also problems with the police – unjustified arrests and police violence against the anarchist and anarcho-sindicalist comrades.

As if that were not enough, the president of the official assembly of students (Student Union Araxáense - UEA) delivered, names and addresses of members of the

committee to combat poverty to the judge of the city of Araxá. That has caused outrage among anarchist students, who announced a campaign to boycott the newspaper "A Voz de Araxá" (associated with UEA) and denounced the UEA, that has connections with fascists.

The campaign also aimed to clarify questions about the social struggle, which has suffered great repression and serious allegations against militants from COB, accusations based on false evidence during the demonstrations of June. The Voz de Araxá falsely claimed that one comrade was a thief and COB/AIT is a gang. Rather they explain that it is a trade union and their struggles are real and horizontal.

The owner of the newspaper and President of the UEA in reality have shown signs of fear as they have

accused the militants without evidence in order to silence the struggles through imprisonment, as can be told by the amount of times they have arrested some comrades.

We declare our total rejection of the repression by the state and treacherous organizations and reaffirm our total belief in the union and social struggle with our comrades, as well as with the Libertarian Youth of Araxá, a student group that has always been with the union even in their most difficult times.

Currently, both the COB and the youth are suffering political persecution by the state and fascists from Araxá. COB is also faced with charges of forming an illegal union.

The next court date will be on February 12, 2014.

Solidarity with the comrades of COB from Araxá and the Libertarian Youth!

NO TO WORKFARE!

Newcastle SolFed in antiworkfare demo, target Marks and Spencers

On January 19, Newcastle SolFed were out again highlighting the use of unpaid labour under the Government's controversial Workfare Scheme. High street chain Marks and Spencers was again targetted by Newcastle SolFed members and as ever there was a positive response from the public.

On December 7, South London SolFed called an anti-workfare picket of Lewisham Marks & Spencer in solidarity with Boycott Workfare's week of action.



M&S's use of workfare made news in June when they announced 1400 new 'work experience' placements for young unemployed people would be made available. These positions are unpaid. Indeed, M&S have set a benchmark of 2% of their workforce to be unpaid. Let's step up the pressure on companies who still think they can profit from unpaid work. Show M&S that exploiting unemployed people is not good for their business.

More information on Boycott Workfare's website: www.boycottworkfare.org

SOLIDARITY WITH ARRESTED SPANISH COMRADES. AGAINST NEW LAW OF "PUBLIC SAFETY"

Members of Bristol Solidarity Federation answered a call-out for solidarity and showed their opposition to the recent arrest of Spanish Anti-fascists and the introduction of punitive anti-protest laws.

Below is the text of the leaflet produced by Spaniards living in Bristol.

In the last two days, in Seville and Madrid, more than 30 people have been arrested in their homes or nearby for their activism against a fascism that is growing in Europe by exploiting the economic crisis. These arrests are part of a period in which the government intends to adopt a new law on public safety that limits the right to strike (making it virtually impossible) and also limiting other forms of protest. Limiting and disabling in general all ways of struggle that does not come within the channels of power, ie: the ways that work.

The arrests in the recent days are just meant to be a warning and an exemplary punishment, intended to intimidate any person who intends to move to fight the injustices of a system that has nothing in mind to people beyond economic profits at all costs.

None of this is new, in times of crisis, when people has a hard time, when they have no jobs or the one they have is precarious, when banks are evicting people from their homes, when they don't let us live, we can only fight back. And there's the political and economic power (but is it not the same?) to limit, restrict, prevent that struggle, fining, harassing, intimidating, torturing, imprisoning... Today we want to show our solidarity with fellow repressed and express that solidarity should be a mainstay in the social movements, under the circumstances. We cannot continue to have isolated bursts of protest on here today and gone tomorrow after the first has gone.

**MORE THAN EVER SOLIDARITY WITH ARRESTED COMRADES.
STOP SUPPRESSION OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS.
PEOPLES OF THE WORLD, RISE UP!**

On the 27th December, Brighton SolFed members and Spanish migrant workers from the collective "Marea Granate", were in Churchill Square supporting a coordinated international protest against the current wave of repression in Spain. The protest was in response to the call for solidarity by our Spanish comrades.

Last November, thirty workers were arrested because of their participation in an education strike. This is only one more step in the repression and intimidation strategy of the Spanish government. The increase of detentions and



the new laws against the protests, show that they want ordinary people to keep quiet while they dismantle basic civil rights and attack their live conditions.

Despite the weather, over ten activists took part and around a hundred pamphlets were given to passersby. Some of them, braving the wind and the rain, decided to stop in order to have more information about what's happening and show their support.

Brighton SolFed, will go on supporting our spanish comrades and we denounce the intimidation by the Spanish government. We know that this is not just a problem of a "foreign country". Repression is the systematic answer of all states to people who denounce their privileges. Only through international workers' solidarity can we protect ourselves.

From our leaflet:

On November 28th thirty people were arrested in Madrid, nineteen of them in their homes or workplaces. They are accused of participating in violent incidents during the latest education strike. The Spanish mass media immediately published names of those arrested and drew attention to the social or political groups they are members of.

However, some of those arrested weren't involved and have not committed crimes. What then are the criteria for the Spanish police to detain these people? This is easy to answer – they have illegal blacklists of collectives and individuals. They want to stop the spread of legitimate social protest by using the tactic of fear and intimidation.

Among the collectives targeted we find, once again, the anarchist movement. In this instance the CNT (a historical anarcho-syndicalist union), the FIJL (Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth) as well as individuals. This is not the first time in recent months that state repression against the anarchist movement has significantly increased. There are recent examples of such shocking detentions and processes, in which highly questionable practices have been used, in Barcelona, Sabadell, Logroño and elsewhere.

We are not surprised at this because Spanish people are continually suffering serious attacks from the government on their living conditions. Unemployment, privatization, precariousness and political corruption are just a few of the causes for bringing the country towards an explosive situation. The ruling political and economic powers know that only action by the people can thwart their plans. However, efforts to criminalise and isolate those more actively involved are not the only planned measures. Repression is going so far as to attack the most basic rights of the people. We are facing reform of criminal law and new anti-protest legislation that will mean, for example, life imprisonment, restrictions to the right of demonstration and freedom of expression, lack of legal defence, police collusion with private security and police impunity.

Meanwhile, corruption, fraud and the use of torture is happening before our eyes and an end to this is not anticipated.

XXV IWA Congress, December 6-8 in Valencia, Spain



Delegates from all IWA Sections attended the XXV Congress in Spain, which dealt with a variety of proposals and matters related to the better functioning of the IWA, new international syndical projects, expanding the presence of the IWA, etc.

The IWA decided to work on some ambitious projects. These include the creation of international branch networks and developing a presence in East Asia. The first of these plans hopes to see workers in the same branch working together across borders to promote common demands and campaigns. Those who proposed such a project hope that it will be one way of joining together workers in different countries who have similar problems, so that their struggles can be stronger and take on a more international character. In terms of East Asia, a working group has been set up to promote the activities of the International in that region and strengthen and expand contacts there. We have already started publishing some news from the IWA

sections on the IWA website in Chinese and are planning further texts to be translated.

A number of agreements taken related to the internal functioning of the IWA and, where some things were unclear, procedures were set into place. This included such matters as the system for minute taking, the procedure for recalling the Secretariat and the system for regulating dues.

A few things were added to or changed in the Statutes of the IWA and the updated version may be found on the webpage. A couple of the changes were just confirming and adding the obvious: for example that the IWA Secretariat is not a paid position. And as the frequency of the Congresses was changed from once every 4 years to once every 3 years, this was changed as well.

The IWA also decided to continue with the same voting procedures that have been used since 1922.

A number of new organizations joined the IWA. The ASF from Australia has become a full Section and the Autonomous Workers Syndicate from Bulgaria and FAS from Austria have become Friends of the IWA.

Unfortunately there were just too many matters on the agenda and some also generated a lot of debate or were complicated. A number of matters were left pending. An Extraordinary Congress will be held in Portugal in 2014 to deal with these issues.

The Secretariat of the IWA was transferred to Poland for the period up to the next Ordinary Congress, which should be held in that country in 2016.



Solidarity against Repression at San Carlo Hospital

USI expresses its distress at the situation in San Carlo Hospital. In November, workers were fined 12,000 euros for supposedly „insulting” the administration of the hospital. This is not the first time that the administration has taken them to court for their criticisms; they have filed 5 cases in the last few years. However the workers were able to prove their allegations which justified their criticisms.

Instead of addressing the accusations of a badly-run health care system which the USI union addressed in their internal bulletin, the judge looked at the issue of calling two hospital administrators „Beagle Boys” in a leaflet. USI condemns this judgement as an exaggeration.

They also point out that at the same time this judgement was made, authorities ordered the destruction of part of the hospital due to its bad technical state and that this bad state was caused by underfinancing. In general, the union is fighting against the destruction of the health care system.

The IWA expresses its solidarity with those fighting against the dismantling of the public health care system and with our comrades in USI. We likewise condemn the repression of activists for such a reason and we call on others to show support for the union by contributing to a solidarity fund.

Donations can be sent to:

CURRENT ACCOUNT 46004 at Banca Popolare di Milano ag.5, headed to USIS (Italian Trade Union Health)
IBAN: IT22 Y 05584 01605 000 000 046 004 stating the reason "Sentenza San Carlo"

On the Current Events In Ukraine

Currently in Ukraine, a power struggle is taking place. Many working class people, whose interests are not protected by the state or capital, and whose material situation is often dramatic, have been taking part in these events, hoping to bring in change and secure a better future.

Struggling, protesting, striking are normal and positive reactions against an unjust or oppressive system. Our solidarity is with working people, against all those who exploit them, govern them and mislead them, taking power and control over the real issues that effect their lives. However it is hard to miss the fact that with these protests come a power struggle between different groups of bourgeoisie, governors and would-be governors who will bring no

good to people, just change the names of the ruling cliques, just direct the benefits of ruling into new pockets.

We strongly denounce the repression and violence used, whether by state agents or by thugs protecting somebody's interests.

This conflict may have many aspects, but it is clear that we cannot support either of the main power interests. We are equally against the repressive regime of Yanukovich and the main tendencies of the „opposition”, which range from Euroenthusiasts naively believing in the myths of neoliberals, to nationalists and even fascistic groups.

The governments of the European Union, presented as some type of „solution” by some Ukrainians, can

repress just as well as Yanukovich and as workers in all those countries know, it is not anything that guarantees any better standards of living. Many of its realities mean just the opposite.

What is needed is an movement that will attack, at the same time, the two leading causes of misery and repression: the state and capital. We call on all workers and libertarian organizations of Ukraine not to be used as pawns or useful idiots of the main factions, to call mass assemblies and to create alternative slogans and goals for your struggle!

Long live the struggle towards libertarian social revolution!

**IWA Secretariat
Warsaw, January 26, 2014**



iwa-ait.org